

R E M A R K S

In the Office Action claim 4 was rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Sporck (US 3,120,206), and claim 5 was rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Sporck in view of Isokawa (US 5,279,688) for the reasons set forth in the Office Action.

By this amendment the subject matter of claim 5 is incorporated into claim 4. Claim 4, as amended now includes the ranges of various components contained in the steel materials suitable for use in the present invention are 0.2-0.6 wt% of C, 0.01-.01 wt% of Si, 0.05-0.5 wt% of Mn, 0.001-0.01 wt% of B, 0.01-01 wt% of Ti or Nb, with the balance being Fe.

As mentioned above, an upper limit for the content of C contained in the steel material used in the present invention is 0.6 wt%. Under such a condition, if Si and Mn are controlled within their allowable ranges of 0.01-0.1% and 0.05-0.5%, then there is ensured a high ductility for the matrix of the steel material. This makes it possible for the steel materials to contain C in a content as high as 0.6 wt% (such C content was not possible in prior art since a steel material containing C content of 0.6% in a conventional material could not be subjected to a plasticizing treatment).

Since the above-mentioned ranges of various components contained in the steel materials used in the present invention are neither disclosed nor inherently taught by any of the cited prior art references, and since such ranges of various components can

provide the above-discussed advantages, it is believed that amended claim 4 is inventive and thus allowable.

Claim 5 is canceled in view of the inclusion of the subject matter of claim 5 in claim 4.

In the event there are further issues remaining in any respect the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone attorney to reach agreement to expedite issuance of this application.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Since the present claims set forth the present invention patentably and distinctly, and are not taught by the cited art either taken alone or in combination, this amendment is believed to place this case in condition for allowance and the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the matter, enter this amendment, and to allow all of the claims in this case.

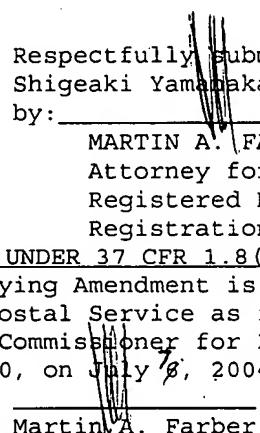
Respectfully submitted
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 CFR 1.8(a)

I hereby certify that the accompanying Amendment is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on July 8, 2004.

Dated: July 8, 2004


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